

# W.K. Kellogg Airport



Snow removal operations

January 2015

## Large machines for a large winter maintenance job

The W.K. Kellogg Airport staffs seven maintenance workers who have a long list of jobs, one of which is clearing snow on the airport runways, taxiways and other paved areas on the grounds of the airport.

This work is important because any buildup of snow in these areas could create unsafe conditions for an aircraft operating at our city's airport.

The Oshkosh trucks used to do this job look much like the snow plows used on city streets and the snow blowers used by residents on their driveways — but giant-sized. The airport uses 20-foot-wide plows, snow blowers and wide brooms to perform the tasks of clearing

snow.

The trucks replaced a team of dump trucks with plows attached that previously performed the same jobs. The new trucks are more effective and efficient, offering side window windshield wipers, front window defrost and other features to help crews do the job.

Clearing airport pavement still can take all day. The photos on this information sheet were taken on Jan. 9, after a moderate snow storm. The crew was out plowing, blowing and brooming the entire day, even with the larger equipment. One runway is almost two miles long and 150 feet wide; it takes time to clear those areas, especially when the wind is

blowing snow across the runways and impairing the vision of crew members, as it was on Jan. 9.

The blower can throw 5,000 tons of snow per hour. All the trucks can make tight turns and maneuver for ease of snow clearing.

**Airport:** 15551 S. Airport Drive  
**Phone:** (269) 966-3570



## How it works



First, crews use a snow plow truck to clear runways, taxi areas and all pavement near the airport's tenants, including Duncan Aviation and the WMU Flight School. They plow down straightaways and in circular motions, depending on the area.



Next, a snow blower removes the ridges and piles created by the plows, near the edge of all pavement. The blower driver blows the snow into the field areas, while avoiding the lights/signs along the runways and taxi areas.



In certain conditions, a large broom truck is used to clear the surface and provide better traction. This is used instead of a de-icing chemical treatment.